Ally Sloper's Half Holiday

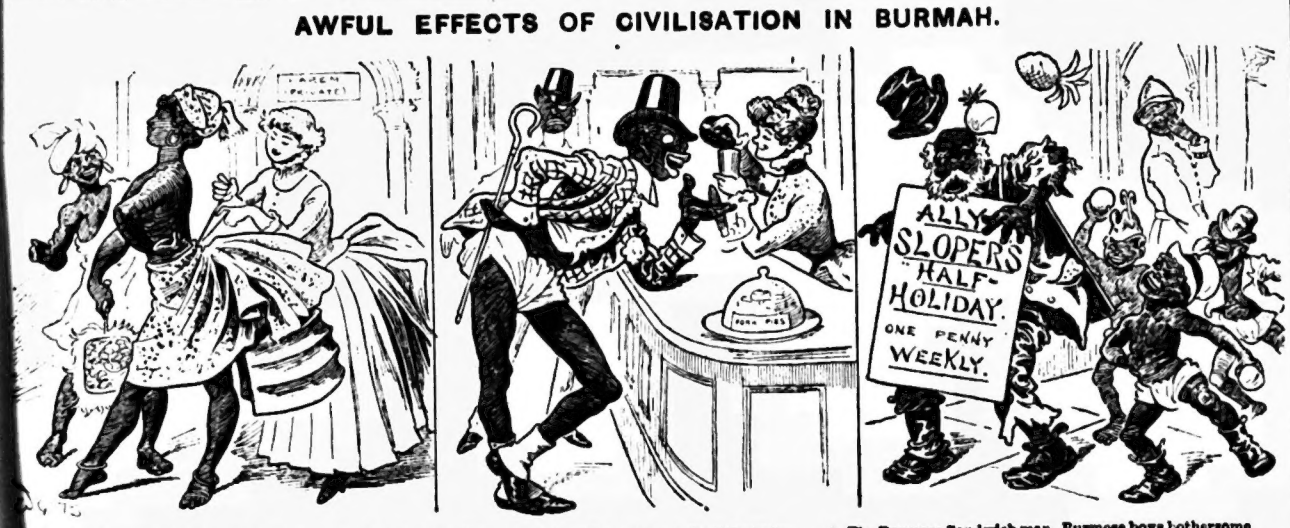
BEING A SELECTION, SIDE-SPLITTING, SENTIMENTAL, AND SERIOUS, FOR THE BENEFIT OF OLD BOYS, YOUNG BOYS, ODD BOYS GENERALLY, AND EVEN GIRLS.

Vol. III.—No. 92.] SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1886. [ONE PENNY.

ALLY'S SUNDAY DINNER.

"No, my dear, we no longer call Aunt Geeser aunt. Poor Pa, coming home last Sunday from the baker's with the beef, ran against her and Evelina at the street corner, as they were coming from church. Passers by who witnessed Snatcher and Toddles gambolling with the baked potatoes, could scarcely refrain from smiling."—TOOTSIE.

AWFUL EFFECTS OF CIVILISATION IN BURMAH.



1. The Burmese Beauty "improved. 2. The Burmese Masher and the "Burmaid" at the "Tarteries. 3. The Burmese Sandwich man. Burmese boys bothersome

CHOKED.

ONE of the most horrible murders on record occurred in Paris on New Year's Eve, 1850. Two old ladies, Madame Ribault and Mademoiselle Lebelle, jointly occupied a set of apartments in a house let out in flats. The former was an authoress, and her publisher sent one of his clerks, named Laforcade, to pay her a certain sum of money due. This clerk had a short time previously had a quarrel with her about a disputed account, in which he was proved to be in the wrong; and on this occasion he offered her two hundred francs in settlement of her claim for four hundred, saying she had already drawn the rest on account, and producing a receipt—the signature to which (her own) she indignantly pronounced to be a forgery

On this a violent altercation ensued, when the clerk struck her several blows on the head and chest with some sharp instrument, beneath which she sank to the ground apparently dead. The sound of her fall brought her friend, Mademoiselle Lebelle, to the spot The clerk flew at her, and in a few minutes she was a corpse The murderer then went quietly home, and appeared at his office as usual next day, under the impression that there was no one alive to tell the story.

In this, however, he was mistaken. Madame Ribault, presently recovering consciousness, although much exhausted by loss of blood, managed to crawl to a table on which was a small bell, but the noise of the carriages in the street prevented the sound of its ringing being heard, and it was not for some hours that help arrived. Fearing that she would die there alone

and leave her murderer free, the old lady attempted to write in blood on her chemise the name of her assassin. Finding that the letters on the linen were illegible, she crawled painfully to the fire board, and on it in blood wrote "*Clerk of M. T——.*" The letters were very irregular but quite legible. Some others following the T, however, could not be read.

After this, Madame Ribault made as much noise as her failing strength would allow, and at length, after a weary period of suffering, and only when day dawned, the door was at last forced open. She had lain there eight hours in a pool of blood, growing weaker and weaker, and by her side lay the corpse of her friend.

After the wretch had stabbed her in different places, he had endeavoured to force a piece of cloth down her throat, but that she succeeded in dragging away. The cloth in question—a napkin—was found and bore the marks of teeth and blood.

It was at first thought that the other old lady, Mademoiselle Lebelle, had been strangled, but on examination none of the contusions caused by strangulation could be seen. On looking inside her mouth, however, a black pin was found, and after a while a black ribbon was discovered in the throat. By the aid of instruments this was pulled up, and to it was attached the cap that Madame Ribault had worn on the previous evening. It had been pressed into a sort of ball, and rammed violently down by a stick, or some other instrument.

The assassin attempted to commit suicide by cutting his own throat with a piece of glass that he took from the window, but was prevented in time enough to save him for another fate.

* * * * * *

For a time the two young and beautiful youths, bright-eyed and rosy-cheeked, who had been wallowing in these pleasant details, were silent and abstracted, as the long-suffering reader may have chanced to notice 'tis their wont to be when not otherwise employed.

Then a strangely lustrous smile beamed on the countenance of the boy by the name of Alexandry, and in his usual musical tones he murmured:—

"Half Aunt Geeser's Sunday-go-to-meeting cap would choke a black."

"You forget, Alexandry," said his friend, familiarly known as Bill the Blood-Stained, or the Cauldron of Crime. "You forget that Geeser is a relative of mine—indeed, my mother. Were we ever compelled to shorten her misplaced existence, perchance some crockery placed in the dark upon the stairs, or the top step buttered, may meet the case."

(Next week a real good one.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*** Owing to the demand on our space, we cannot guarantee to answer Correspondents immediately on the receipt of their Queries—particularly the queerest; but all questions put to the Editor, or to any member of "THE FAMILY," will be answered in due course.

CROSS (New Cross).—*Tootsie regrets to say she is out of photos just at present; meantime the Eminent hereby nominates the Royal Naval School a "Habitation of the Sloper League for the Distribution of Free Drinks."*——H. M.—*Your drawing of Lord Bob is really of no use to us.*——PROMPTER (Kilburn).—*"The Dramatic and Musical Directory" is published by C. H. Fox, Russell Street, Covent Garden.*——A HOUSEFUL OF ALLY'S ADMIRERS (Hackney).—*The Eminent feels quite waxy at your present.*——AN ADMIRER.—*You may admire as much as you like, but don't be dirty.*——THREE-WATER ADELAIDE (Devonport).—*Pinkleton is in no way related to the Eminent. We've no doubt "he would he were."*——MARIAN STEAD.—*ALLY'S love, and he's very delighted with the Gingham Rumbereller you sent him.*——JOHN GRAY (Inverness).—*The coloured portrait of Alexandry, painted by you, will ever be prized by the son of the Eminent* Littérateur.——W. HYDEN (Clapham Junction).—*No room for the Goose Romance.*——F. D. H.—*"The Strange Adventures of Two Single Gentlemen" is out of print, but it is intended to republish it.*——REGINALD DE KOOTE (Colchester).—*Go it; don't mind Lord Bob.*——W. P. SMITH (Brixton).—*Of course "Snatcher" is muzzled; how could it be otherwise? You need have no fear of coming to "the Sloperies."*——A. L. (Leadenhall Street).—*Glad to hear the Eminent has mashed Jenny.*——F. LISLE (Calthorpe Street).—*Very good, but not good enough for the "Award of Merit."*——W. J. COOKE (Cork).—*That Paddy must have been a rum 'un.*——TOMMY.—*Of course Tootsie is an actress. What did you think she was, pray?*——A. H. (Glasgow).—*We fancy that would almost amount to a breach of faith.*——T. RENNIE (Marlborough).—*Fancy you wanting a warming-pan to warm your mother! Oh, dear! whatever are we all coming to?*——"JUGGINS" (Barnsbury).—*Only one!*——LITTLE MARY.—*Tootsie's love, and you have had a "Skating" Costume.*——F. M. VAUGHAN (Westminster).—*Of course the "Awards of Merit" have been given to all those whose names have been published in the "HALF-HOLIDAY."*——W. ENO (Briggate).—*You don't say whether you are related to the* FRUIT SALT *man; it might influence us if you were.*——STANLEY HORTON (Lewisham).—*Toddles is all right, and so is McNab. Some people say they both ought to be muzzled.*——P. W. (Manchester).—*We find there is not very much interest taken in Sketching Competitions.*——JOB WIGGINS (Hon. Member for Pinner).—*Whatever are you talking about? We can't make out your letter a bit.*

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S.....
L.....
O.....
P.....
E.....
R.....

Uncle Boffin, having a good deal of time on his hands at present, has kindly consented to act as Judge, so please address all competitions to

UNCLE BOFFIN, J.P.,
"THE SLOPERIES,"
99 Shoe Lane, London, E.C.

*** *The List will close on* SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH.

JUMBLES AND GINGERBREAD.

THE proper age for an anchorite would be hermit-age; of a father, parent-age; of a lover, eng-age; of a clergyman, parson-age; of a doctor or nurse, assu-age; of a soldier, cour-age; of a cow (no, *not* cowrage), pastur-age; of a wanderer, pilgrim-age; of a poor man, patron-age; of a procession, equip-age; of a railway, narrowgu-age; of a German, saus-age.

***

IT is gratifying to learn that the latest young-lady fashion is to "make up venerable." Golden locks are dross in the market, browns are banished, and blacks are bleached. The damsels of New York have learnt to "assume a virtue if they have it not," and are imparting a respectability to their appearance by dyeing their hair *grey*. Rumour says no hair at all will be the next fashion, and that our sisters and wives will make their appearance with a billiard-ball baldness, appalling to behold. A grey *mère* is all very well, but what will the young men of the day say to a gray *fille* (please pronounce "filly")?

FASHION FANCIES.—By Miss Sloper.
No. 92.—"The Egyptian" Costume.

A Case of Glass *without* Care.
Effects after spending an evening with Mr. M'Gooseley at the Moochers' Arms.

A SPIRITED ORATION.
"With these we will clutch all England from the likker; this his, hindeed, a proud moment," said our chairman.

With all these little attentions, still he is not happy!

These are relatives of ALLY'S first wife.

A Peerless Peer

RATHER CONTRADICTORY.—A medical contemporary, who has been giving the fair sex a lesson on health, remarks that "Red cheeks are simply oxygen in a reflected form; and young ladies anxious to possess them should seek them where the roses get theirs—out of doors." This is true enough, doubtless; but there is something to be said on the other side. How does our medical friend explain away the fact that roses stop in their beds all day?

***

WITH the view of preventing the terror of timid people at thunderstorms, felt from the result of a smart application of lightning, a contemporary suggests that "a conductor should be made an ordinary appendage to a dwelling-house as a system of gas or water-pipes." Under these circumstances, people would of course be safe, *wrather* or no. (See?)

***

EAGER FOR THE FRAY.—A fashionable paper announces that in Paris everything in female attire is worn just now with frayed edges, making it difficult to distinguish ragged dresses from whole ones. This has been done, it is supposed, with benevolent intentions towards small incomes, though it is difficult to believe it, even on so eminent an authority. The most appropriate comment seems to be "Hem!"

***

ONLY a couple of girls—
Happy and thoughtless and free;
One is in love with Jack, and one—
One is in love with me!
And we are going to see
Which best man shall be.

Only a couple of hearts—
Only four bright blue eyes;
Heaven and earth! what wouldn't we do,
Each to win his prize?
Each man loves and sighs—
When the time comes, TRIES.

* * * *

Two weddings in one church—

Two bridegrooms, proud and rich—
Two smiling brides, who give their hands,
No matter which to which,
For, hang it all! you see,
'Tis not to Jack or me.

***

THERE are great things in store for Paterfamilias. It is proposed that the sea—the "briny," the genuine article, "the blue, the fresh," and so on—shall be pumped up into a reservoir on Brighton Downs, and brought thence through fifty miles of pipes to the Serpentine. Fancy a salt lake in Hyde Park instead of the dirty puddle which formerly had place there! The lodging-house keepers are in a panic, and the bathing machine proprietors will soon be seen driving their shandredan vehicles up to London. Imagine the disgust of Mater when, by-and-bye, she suggests that "Little Polly is looking rather *peaky*," and that "the children want a month at Margate," and Pater replies, "Oh, take them up to Hyde Park!" Or, better still, every one might have a supply-pipe laid into his own garden, and thus have all the advantages of a residence on the coast without stirring from home. Oh, delightful!

***

WITH the true instinct which so often supplies the place of a high-art education, the road makers and menders have been piling up against the bases of our public statues such things as road-sweepings, granite, dust, &c. If it be not practicable, as suggested, to cart the statues away "with the other rubbish," there is still a splendid opportunity for improving the present condition of the metropolis. Let the road-menders go on "piling up the agony" until every statue is completely covered and then let them pack up their traps and go away, and never disinter the hidden monstrosities.

***

AH, me! woe is me! Well-a-day! well-a-day!
The world is so vulgar, so far, far from sweet.
O rapture, O joy, on a rebeck to play,
With loveliest Petrarchan shoes on one's feet!
O soft age of purity, meekness, and joy!
Of poetry, grace, and all tenderest thought!
Where the pure-metalled soul was quite free from alloy,
And Beauty was worshipped, and all else was nought!

Ah! sweet bygone age, may we not win thee back?
At least may we not gild our lives with one beam
Of thy brightness, by turning our steps in thy track,
By weaving about us the charm of a dream?
O sweetest of waking dreams, dreamed eye-closed,
To live Burne-Jones draped, a pale lily to hold;
A dado behind one, and, superimposed,
A background of utterest glory of gold!

***

TEETOTALERS who felicitate themselves on the progress of their cause will do well to digest the following:—"An old stager was compelled by his worthy spouse to 'join the cold-water army,' which he did, promising never to touch a drop of anything else, except in sickness." So far the story is excellent. But now for the moral. The reformed individual has *never been well since.*

***

THERE is an old adage which says that "the longest way round is the nearest way home," and it seems to be as true now as it was fifty years ago. A gentleman connected with a London paper reaching his office in London the other evening, found his door closed and the porter asleep, while the telegraph clerk was at work beyond hearing the knocker, in an upper story. So he telegraphed from another office close by to a clerk at Glasgow, who in turn sent the message back to London. Of course he was let in directly.

***

SURELY the genius who invented wooden nutmegs and oats made of deal chips cannot yet be "played out." An American paper informs us that a Maine man is about to apply for a patent for an artificial oyster made out of flour paste, tapioca, salt, and water. The inventor places these in second-hand oyster-shells, which are carefully glued round the edges. There can be no dispute as to the success of this invention. It is unmistakably native—American.

***

AT dinner-parties, oft with mortal dread,
The diner views the advent of a boy—
The hostess' pet—a brat who should, instead
Of in the dining-room, be tuck'd in bed,
For sure he has a license to annoy.

At dinner-parties, oft with rapt delight,
The diner views the end of all his cares—
Young turbulent, by force removed from sight,
Kicking and screaming with a giant's might,
To make his nurse's life a grief upstairs.

***

THE friends of the Fenians, with the intention, no doubt, of damaging the revenue, have circulated for signature a pledge that the subscribers will abstain from tobacco until an amnesty is granted. This is very amusing; they might abstain from whisky as well, but perhaps they are afraid that, if they did, the principal source of Fenian courage would be dried up.

***

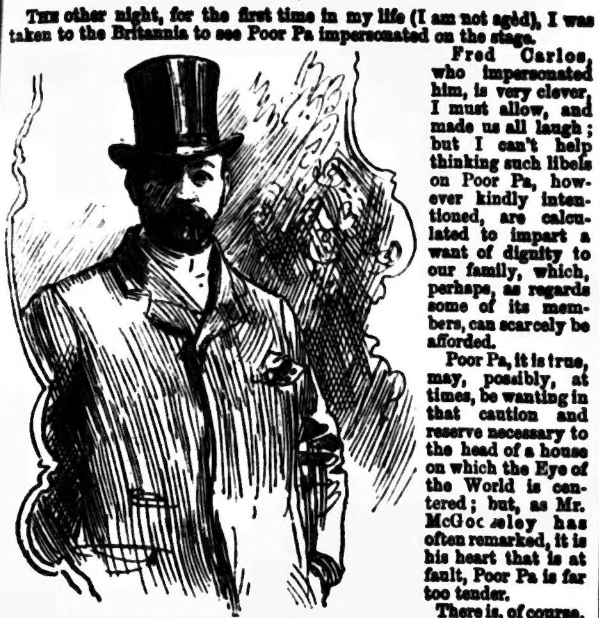
A CHARITABLE gentleman, seeing a little boy barefoot in the streets on a cold day recently, took him into a shop and fitted him out with a new pair of shoes. In the evening, the benevolent gentleman received back the shoes, and an accompanying note from the indignant father, who said that he was better able to buy his son shoes than the giver was, if he had thought it proper the boy should wear them.

***

AN Irish paper tells us a story about an itinerant musician who has created some excitement during the past few days, by walking about with a really excellent grinding-organ, placed in a donkey-cart. "The wanderer is a gentleman of some property in one of the central counties in Ireland, who has wagered £5,000 that he will support himself and his donkey for six months by grinding his organ." There is an old proverb that "What is enough for one is also enough for two" which seems peculiarly applicable to this case.

TOOTSIE AT THE "BRIT."

The other night, for the first time in my life (I am not agèd), I was taken to the Britannia to see Poor Pa impersonated on the stage.



The author, Fred Bowyer, at the wings.

Fred Carlos, who impersonated him, is very clever, I must allow, and made us all laugh; but I can't help thinking such libels on Poor Pa, however kindly intentioned, are calculated to impart a want of dignity to our family, which, perhaps, as regards some of its members, can scarcely be afforded.

Poor Pa, it is true, may, possibly, at times, be wanting in that caution and reserve necessary to the head of a house on which the Eye of the World is centered; but, as Mr. McGoc.eley has often remarked, it is his heart that is at fault, Poor Pa is far too tender.

There is, of course, as I pointed out to Ross and Baxter, really no such place as Sloper's Island, although, I believe, a year or two ago the *Sporting Times* said Columbus did sight that strange land on his travels.

The "Brit," I am told is the pet and popular name of the big theatre in Hoxton High Street, which Mrs. Lane so ably manages, and where there is always a remarkably good entertainment. As you must know, at a certain West-end house lately, a play was produced the audience did not care for, and in it an actress appeared as a dreadfully unpopular heroine, whose acting was not cared for either. They hissed both play and actress, but hissed the actress more because of the play than for any fault of her own. Mrs. Lane does not produce plays which there is any chance of her huge audiences howling down. This clever and astute manageress is, I presume, very careful to get things upon the boards that will please all her patrons. Some other managers seem to think all the money lies in front of the orchestra. Now and then they would act more wisely perhaps by cutting a slice off that part of the auditorium and adding it to some other.

Harmony, Frances Talbot; *King Ally Klepto*, Fred Carlos; *Prince Merrimac*, Millie Howes.

Mrs. Lane's author, Fred Bowyer, has written a very good book, and if I were she he should write several more books for me.

Chirgwin is awfully good, and there is a capital scene between him and the manageress.

The Dook Snook, whom I accompanied to the theatre (Bob has a bad cold), told me he had not been there himself for years upon years—never, indeed, since one evening when he went to see a dramatized version of a then popular story called, *Charley Wag, the New Jack Sheppard*, with the author of which he was acquainted; and the man who did the villain of the piece, and whose wicked past weighed heavily on him, kept on starting long stories with "'ears ago," by which, of course, he meant years ago, only the Dook thought he said, "Here's a go," and couldn't make it out for ever so long.

I am afraid the Dook, also, is rather given to telling long stories about the past, which are not always quite as interesting to other people as to himself; but we can't all be perfect.

Volanti, Sara Lane; *Daddy Long Legs*, G. H. Chirgwin.

It is wonderful how well he is preserved, if he is anything like as old as Bob and Billy make out.

Billy, by the way, is apparently rather more impecunious than usual, which I don't wonder at, since he has been mashed on that girl Lardi Longstocking; and, what do you think, dears? there's Poor Pa, too, for ever behind the scenes at the Friv., where that Goodenough's got a speaking part, "one line and a word." Really, things are hardly satisfactory.

THE WALTZ OF THE SEASON!!!

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THE SCANDALMONGER.

"Have you heard the report?" asked Bullyman.

"What report?" asks Bullyman's friend, who knows the former means mischief, and rejoins, accordingly,—

"Oh, *I* don't believe it for an instant, you know," and as the report came from himself, it is very probable he didn't; "but they say that B. caught C. flirting with his wife. Devil of a row. Wife disappeared, of course, every one guesses with whom."

"You don't *say* so?" says the friend, who hates Mrs. B., because she is pretty and has snubbed him.

"No, *I* don't say so, of course; but funny fact—wife *is* gone away from home, and a fellow called upon C., and found he was gone too!" Then Bullyman laughs and shrugs his shoulders, and is determined to say no more on the subject to any one at present, for he knows he has said enough for his purpose.

Bullyman's friend meets another. Asks *him* "if he has heard the report"—tells the story, with additions of his own—carefully suppressing the fact that he heard it first from Bullyman. And so the scandal is fairly set going. It is whispered amongst the women, who tell each other that they always suspected something was wrong in that quarter, and make up their minds to revenge themselves for poor little Mrs. B.'s good looks, feeling all the rapture of virtuous indignation and feminine spite.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. B. are enjoying themselves very quietly in Town, and the gay Lethario, C., is doing some business at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. A short time afterwards, B. quarrels with C. about a horse, and look daggers at each other.

Everybody knows the meaning of this, and Bullyman triumphs. He can't bear B. because he happens to be a gentleman, and he hates Mrs. B., because he knows *she* thinks him a donkey, and laughs at him. But Bullyman enjoys himself immensely now, for he knows the Snobbingtons will cut Mr. B., who has always treated them cavalierly, and that he, Bullyman, will be asked to dine at their table twice a week at least, and be expected to say a good deal on the subject of Mrs. B.'s indiscretions. They are very terrible, of course, for the little woman has the misfortune to be a lady—and a good-looking one to boot. And the people near Puddleton are, most of them, snobs, and she does not appreciate them. Moreover, she is foolish enough to be fond of her husband, in an old-fashioned way, which is very offensive to the people near Puddleton, for they don't believe in such things.

I say Bullyman, as Bullyman, is detested, yet decent and honest people, as well as the scandal-loving snobs, allow him to enter their houses. Why is this? I believe it is simply because they don't care to take any trouble about him, and accept his society as an evil to be borne. But I don't think that is any excuse, and I cannot help believing, that if there were a sort of social court held, especially in country communities, when people convicted of whispering lies of their neighbours, spreading "reports" which they generally originate, and, in short, doing anything that encouraged scandal and gossip of a mischievous sort, should be banished from the social circle for life,—there would soon be an end to the Bullyman tribe.

Who'll try it?

"WEARY."

Weary of dancing, so weary,
Longing to sit down and sup;
To find for this sad heart and dreary,
The solace of cool claret-cup.

Weary, so weary of wishing
For a partner that's gone from my sight,
For a hand to be placed on my shoulder,
By a fair form enveloped in white.

Weary, so weary of flirting,
Waiting for something to eat;
For something to soothe and sustain me—
Say, Bass, lobster salad, cold meat.

For a hand that would lay close beside me
My meerschaum, birdseye, and fuzes,
For a step that would be such sweet music,
If it only brought Soda-and-B.

Wishing and waiting so sadly
For my carriage, that isn't in sight
Willing to walk, oh! so gladly,
But 'tis such an abominable night.

AN ESSAY ON PAINTING.

The art of painting was invented some time ago. It is older than tramways, Irish whisky, saveloys, or the three-years pianoforte system. Framing and glazing came in later.

Painting may not be the very oldest of the fine arts, but it is not far behind any of them. This may be proved by the fact that—

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,

she was painted by one of the very oldest of the Old Masters, viz., Old Master Nature; and a very pretty picture she doubtless made. Painting must, therefore, have been invented before Music was discovered.

In the time of the Ancient Britons the art of Painting was practised on an extensive scale. With an elegant simplicity too much undervalued in modern days, each of our ancestors attired himself neatly and effectively in a coat of blue paint with stockings to match; and here it may be noted, by the way, that we first hear of frames in connection with painting. These were human frames. This is worth remembering.

From painting themselves, the devotees of this fine art gradually rose to painting other things. Some of them got to painting trees, and birds, and flowers—a process which, though it might be possible, could surely hardly be necessary. One person is even spoken of as "painting the lily"—certainly a work of supererer—(perhaps the printer will kindly put the usual number of *erers* here: it is a difficult word to spell. But this is frivolous. Let us resume)—supererogation. That flower-pots should be painted seems reasonable enough, but the fellow who would put a coat of yellow ochre on a buttercup, for instance, ought to have been put out of his misery. It is also a tradition that one ambitious dauber tried to paint the sun, moon, and stars; but how he managed to reach up high enough is not related. The easiest course for the reader is to disbelieve the story.

The next step in the art about which one may speak positively is the fashion which came into vogue of painting doors and window shutters. Hitherto there had been no doors nor windows to paint; but the moment these were originated, of course some painter-fellow must needs become possessed with an insatiable craving to plaster them over with sap-green or brown-umber. Indeed, from the unhappy moment when the art of painting had its origin (whenever that was), there has always been some one slopping round with a pot and a brush to see what mischief he could do.

As centuries rolled on, painters went from worse to worse. They descended from wood to canvas; and in our day, at the right time of the year, examples—dreadful examples—of what painting *may* come to, if painters are allowed to have their fling, are exhibited in London. But here the subject becomes too sad to pursue further. Here let us leave it.

WEAK WOMAN.

Mat Millikin was quite up to the form of the orthodox hero of romance. Mat was a counter-jumper; a young man who smoked shag tobacco, drank bitter beer, was partial to "flutters" for drinks, and yet this prosaic soulless being in one particular followed in the footsteps of all the heroes of romance, from the "Thousand and One Nights," to the days of ourselves and "Ouida"—that is, fell deeply and determinedly in love with a pretty girl. She, too, was of the shop shoppy, with a smile as bright as her eyes, and a heart as light as her step; with a style and go-ahead dash just enough to make women call her "fast," and men declare her "proper." Yes, Mat and his wife were just the style of pair one meets by the hundred or thousand on the "Surrey side."

Mat and his wife.

This story begins where most end. They married. Did they live happy ever afterwards? Wait and see.

I doubt if you would have found a happier man than Mat Millikin during his first year as a Benedick. His hopes and his ambitions were limited; they were centred in his wife, and promotion to be leading salesman.

Now, if Mrs. M. had been as commonplace in her ideas as her lord and master, they might always have lived happily; but she, alas! tired of even love—in a cottage. Mrs. M., unfortunately, was a trifle too much given to novel-reading, and in the pages of the *Girl's Own Gusher*, and similar forms of literature equally cheap and filling, had imbibed notions and fancies as intoxicating and as dangerous as the opium dream. And then one day Mat came home with a very white face, and told how, that business being slack, they were reducing the establishment in which he was employed.

Still she might have proved steadfast and true had not temptation come in her weakest hour.

Of course, there was baby. Yes, there was something lovable in life, and when the little blue eyes danced with delight as they sought her, even she forgot for a time her discontent, and the vague, unreal dreams in which she had indulged. But the dreams would come back again—the longing "for something better than she had known."

Poor Mary! she was more sinned against than sinning—as, indeed, whatever the cynics may say to the contrary, I believe the woman is in ninety-nine such cases out of a hundred.

He who led her step by step down the dangerous incline was what is known as a man about town, a figure in society, with the position, the means, and, in a sense, the education of a gentleman. She beheld around her vice flaunting in jewels and furs, while honesty shivered in squalor and rags. She saw the carriage-wheels of the *demirep* splash the pale cheek of the patient humble worker; still, she should have been content to be patient, bespattered, and virtuous. She was the angel of her husband's heart—the star of his life; but angels and stars have fallen ere now—and she fell also!

The rapid pace was tempting. The sparkle danced in the wine-cup, and the tempter was kind and courtly—for a time.

It was by no means a pleasant story, nor, alas! an uncommon one. A glance, a smile, and a passing bow, a pursuit, a handsome hawk, a fluttering foolish dove, an appointment, a clandestine dinner—flight.

The dream at first was pleasant, something like those in which Mary had been so prone to indulge.

We have said that Mary was good-looking. What was more, she obtained a reputation for being good-looking. She became a celebrity. The cage was gilded, but the bars were there.

But the wheel of fortune which so long had favoured her Giovanni turned in time. Dabbling in City transactions, he burned his fingers.

"Why can't you imitate the Rads, old man!" suggested a friend of his—a new-fledged M.P., "and go in for peace, retrenchment, and reform. They say the lovely lady with whom you ride in the Row costs you a hundred a year for gloves, two hundred for bouquets, and a thousand for bonnets."

The idle words spoken in jest struck home. Giovanni determined to break it gently to her that times were hard, that they must part.

Mary awoke one morning to find herself friendless and deserted. Nemesis had arisen and was in fell pursuit.

* * * * *

Two years have flown, and Mary Millikin stands on one of the bridges that span the silent highway through the great city, friendless, penniless, deserted. There is no one near. Just a spring into the shifting rushing darkness below; it would soon be over! But, ah; between her and that darkness comes the vision of a baby face. If she could only see it once again! hear the ripple of its laughter only once! Instinctively her footsteps turn from death. An hour later she is crouching at the wicket of the house, once her happy honoured home. It is winter; the snow lies thick over all, and the night is bitterly cold. The window is aglow with a cheerful light, telling of warmth and comfort within.

By his lonely though blazing fire Mat Millikin heard that cry; so did the child that slumbered on his knee. The child awoke, as was her habit, breathed that name which stabbed her father to the heart, "Mamma!"

"The sparkle danced in the wine cup."

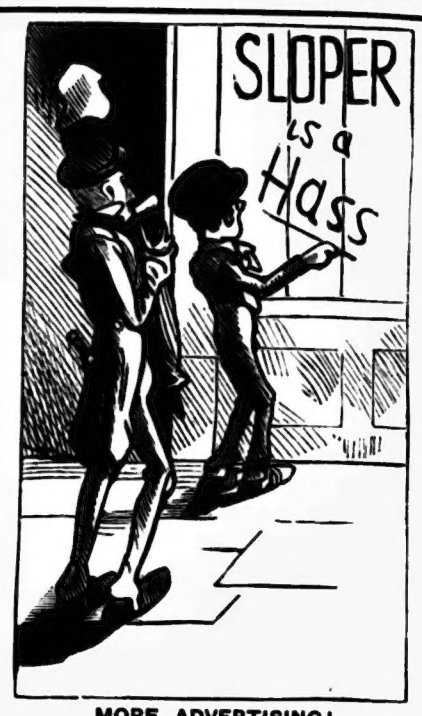
Mat went to the door. What was that huddled heap at the gate? Poor houseless creature!

"Merciful Heaven! Mary!"

And what did this man—who, mark you, was no hero—do? Scoff at him, you cynical men and women of the world. Blame him, ye stern sticklers for morality. The world might scoff or chide or blame him at its will; but his wailing child had cried for her mother, so—he let the hopeless wanderer in.

RATHER A SELL FOR TOMKINS,

Who has asked his wife's rich uncle to dinner, and hearing a ring at the visitors' bell (it was Taters' mistake), rushed forward and shook hands warmly with the Greengrocer, who had come to wait at table.



MORE ADVERTISING!

A. Sloper, Esq., M.P., *on his way home, after a late sitting at the House, thinks he will meander round by* "The Sloperies," *and at early morn catches the Office Boy hard at work.*

The Eminent. Hullo, boy, I say, this ain't much of an advertisement anyhow.

TOO PANTOMIMICAL.

Vegetable (with a sense of injury). Well, you might say good night to a fellow. I'm your cousin Jack.

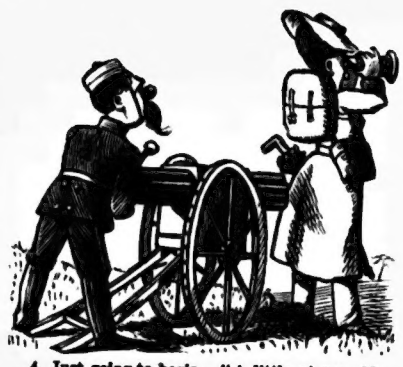
Comedian * * * * I shouldn't a' knowed you, 'pon my soul!

AUNT GEESER'S SISTER AMONG THE BURMESE.

1. Aunt Geeser's Sister, President of the Male Vermin Extermination Society—

2. Has been sent out to Burmah as a caution to Blacks.

3. *Ignorant Official.* Woman, you are not wanted here!
A. G. S. Man, you are not wanted *anywhere!*

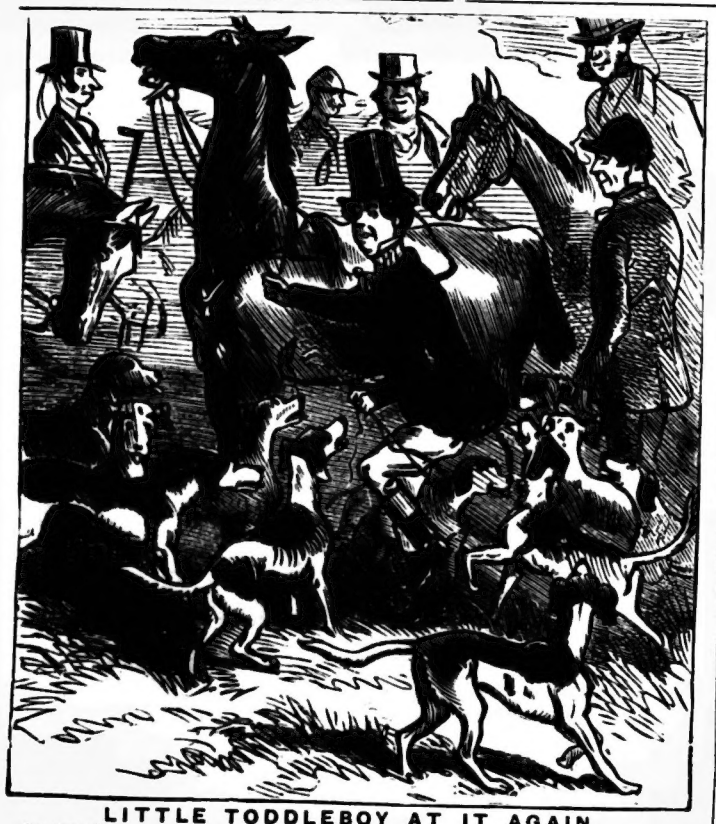


4. Just going to begin. "A little o' one side, Ma'am, if you please."

5. It cannot be denied that A. G. S. moved the Blacks. Poor wretches! they are only human, after all.

6. Golly wolly

7. Now they are happy, though, for she lectures on them nightly. "And these, ladies, are specimens of our lords and masters!" [*Where's Tootsie?*



LITTLE TODDLEBOY AT IT AGAIN.

Not that there was really any harm in his putting a few bloater-paste sandwiches in his coat-tail pocket, just to serve him as a snack during the run; and how could he imagine the stupid dogs would go on so ridiculously? It wasn't Toddleboy's fault.

A CHAMPION SNOWBALL

Made by some chums of Alexandry and Bill Higgins.

A Country Gentleman's first view of an Alhambra ballet. He looks frightened now, but he'll enjoy it when he gets used to it.

SERVED HIM RIGHT.

(*Not an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.*)

Unwholesome Youth. I also am very musical. I sang "Woodman, Spare that Tree, last night and there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

Cruel Young Lady. Were you alone

This noble warrior is off——in the opposite direction to Burmah.

Ikey Mo's great grandfather, a dealer in old clo' and other articles of vertu.

This sweet-looking individual is waiting for his daughter's young man. ALLY envies that young man!

This is a case of the course of true love running smoothly, despite the poet's asseveration.

MEDICAL MEM.—Quacks who do *not* advertise.

McNAB OF THAT ILK; Or, THE ELDER AT IT AGAIN.

1. "It's surely been snawing a wee bit here, Elder," said the Meenister to McNab, as they took the short cut through by Tamsin's Ilk.

2. Muffled shriek. "Mind what ye're aboot wi' that whuskey, Elder."

3. "Dang me," said Tamsin, "if it isna neebir McNab and the Meenister."

4. Dug out. "They're as deed as thussells, Tamsin."

5. "Take them straight tae the kirkeyard, Tamsin."

6. "Thaw it sharp, Tamsin, and drink tae twa scoondrils less in Auld Scootland." *N.B.—McNab visibly interested.*

7. "And wi' me ain whusky tae, ye low villuna." Delight of Grabb and Tamsin.

8. "Tak' a drap o' the dew, Meenister, me partin'. We're no that deed yit."

9. "McNabsh, ye ruggy-duggy, me and you are the kingsh o' th' Hielansh."

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

SCENE—*Country Inn.*

Traveller (mistrustfully). Have you got any decent port, waiter?
Waiter. Oh, dear me, yes sir. Some very excellent port wine.
Traveller. I suppose you don't make less than a bottle?
Waiter. Lor' bless you, no sir. Master never makes less than four or five gallon.

THE SKATING LESSON.

*"He loved her deeply, and wanted her to learn to skate. At first she hesitated—then she said yes. * * * Now she's scrry."*—EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

1. Yes, you see, you jump up like that and cut a figure six with both feet together.

2. She jumped up like that, and cut a figure six. * * Bump!

FLOWERY.

SCENE—*Bow Street Police Court.*

Magistrate. Have you anything to say in answer to this charge, prisoner?
Prisoner. Sure, your worship, only that I am as innocent as the unborn angels.
[*Three months' hard, nevertheless.*

ALLY-CAMPANE.

THE event of last week was the Opening of Parliament by Her Majesty in person. Opinions may differ respecting the merits of some of the newly sworn in; but all were privileged to join in the time-honoured rush from the Commons to the Lords, even the reddest of Republicans. A very rough job that rush is sometimes, and, on the principle of the weakest going to the wall, it has more than once happened that the Premier himself has been jostled out of his place, and left kicking his heels in the cold. This year it was A. SLOPER, and Bradlaugh trampled on the hat. ALLY will have it that he saw Her Majesty at one of the pantomimes; but we must take this for what it is worth, as his eyesight is sometimes foggy.

***

POOR H. J. Byron once compared plays to cigars. "If a play's a bad one," said he, "no amount of puffing will make it draw; if it's good all your friends will be asking you for a box."

***

ANOTHER murder, somewhat similar to the Great Coram Street tragedy, was committed in Paris on the night of the 14th. A woman, twenty-eight years of age, the tenant of a flat (of which the rent is 2,000 fr. a year), who was recently attached to the *corps de ballet* at the Eden Theatre, seems for some little time past to have led a dissolute life. Her paramour, who was cashier at a club, on coming home the other morning at three o'clock, found the body of his mistress extended on the carpet at the side of the bed, with nothing on but her nightdress, her throat being cut and the floor covered with blood. On giving an alarm he learned that she had come home about midnight in company with a man. The *concierge* stated that about an hour after letting in the pair he had, in response to the usual signal, opened the door to let a man out. It was evident that the murderer had gagged his victim while cutting her throat. According to the testimony of the man with whom the girl was living, 6,000 fr. and jewels worth 20,000 fr. have disappeared. Various pieces of furniture were found broken open, so there is no doubt that plunder was the motive of the crime. Securities to the value of 25,000 fr. were hidden under linen, and were not discovered by the assassin.

***

A WELL-written letter from one of the many thousands of destitute people, which appears in a Liverpool paper, shows the need there is of some endeavour of organizing the labour of our unemployed. Although evidently of superior education, the writer found himself driven by necessity to see whether he could not earn a few coppers by sweeping snow from house steps and approaches. After failing in repeated instances to secure a customer, he at last came to a house where his services were required. But on his asking for a broom and shovel he was told to bring his own, and that being impossible, he lost the job. Had he belonged to an organised body, he might have gone out properly equipped, provided he was able to give some sort of security, not necessarily of a material sort, for the safe return of the implements he took out with him. This unfortunate fellow describes the effect of enforced idleness upon him as "paralysing the mental and enervating the physical faculties to the last degree." The inevitable result must be, he foresees, that he and others in the same pitable condition will become totally unfitted to perform their former work, and so gradually degenerate into vagabondage. A cruel case, surely!

***

THE DOOK SNOOK (vice commodore of the "H. H." Yacht Club), hears with pleasure that a very good suggestion has been made with regard to the challenge for the American Cup. It is to the effect that the yacht owners of all the leading clubs subscribe for a handsome prize to be competed for by British cutters, the winner to go out and do battle against the chosen representative of yachtsmen on the other side of the Atlantic. This is taking a leaf out of American yachtsmen's own books; for it will be recollected that the *Puritan* was only chosen to compete with the *Genesta* after she had beaten in a series of trial matches Mr. James Gordon Bennett's *Priscilla*. The winner of the best of three races arranged on the same plan as those in which the *Puritan* met the *Genesta* would be a vessel that would carry the confidence of British sailing men across the Atlantic: more especially if the *Irex*, *Marjorie*, *Galatea*, and such new vessels as Messrs. Watson, Richardson, Fife, or Webb should have on hand, were to compete.

***

WIMBLEDON CAMP promises this year to offer more than its ordinary attractions. Steps are being taken, both in India and Australia, to have the Volunteer forces of these great dependences properly represented by regularly selected teams at the next prize meeting of the National Rifle Association at Wimbledon, in the competition for the Cup given by the Rajah of Kolapore to be shot for by teams from the Auxiliary Forces of Great Britain, India, Canada, and each of the Colonies. Hitherto India has only been represented on these occasions by teams, to a great extent composed of such of her Volunteers as happened to be in England at the moment, and Australia has never yet been represented at all. The only suggestion the Eminent can make is a supply of native ladies, so that Nautch dances and other appropriate pastimes may enliven the evening hours.

***

IN the course of a recent divorce suit the respondent stated that her husband had kept her without sufficient supplies of food, and that before she went out to buy a bloater she had to give him an estimate of the cost. Perhaps the bloater was sometimes a *soldier*. *Red (h)erring* on the part of the fair and frivolous one!

THE testing of the bayonets has been going on at Aldershot, and it seems, there is no doubt, that a grave scandal has been revealed by the examination. There is not a wide difference, taking each regiment separately, in the percentage of bayonets found unfit for service, but throughout them all there were found from 170 to 230 useless weapons in every 700 examined. In the opinion of some qualified to judge, the test the bayonets were put to was the most severe that has ever been tried, and there can be no doubt as to the quality of the metal that stood it. In the testing, the bayonet is subjected to a bend of six inches, and the sword-bayonet to four, and afterwards they are further tried by being struck very hard four or five times on a solid piece of oak. The public at large, and soldiers in particular, and everybody but England's enemies, will rejoice to hear that Iky Mo's attempts to procure a contract for a fresh supply have proved abortive.

***

A PERSIAN, shortly since, became bail for a fellow-countryman accused on a criminal charge. When the day of trial came the accused was not forthcoming. The bailsman was informed that he must produce his friend, or the recognisances would be estreated. He went to the accused, and having employed in vain every possible argument, entreaty, and threat, he finally drew his dagger, and plunged it in the breast of the defaulter. He then bore the body to the judge, saying that he brought the corpse, since he failed to procure the living man. He was painfully surprised on being himself arrested on a charge of murder.

***

A WOMAN at Mansfield placed her child, aged twelve months, in a chair in front of a large fire. According to the medical evidence the infant must have remained there about an hour, and have been slowly roasted. The whole of the front part of the body was injured. The nails were burnt off, and the knees charred. Horrible cookery, wasn't it?

***

MR. HERBERT JOHNSON, the artist who accompanied the Prince of Wales throughout the Royal tour in India, has been selected to design the memorial tablet to be erected in St. Paul's Cathedral in memory of the War Correspondents, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. St. Leger Herbert, who fell in the Soudan; and there can be little doubt that he will turn out some good work. We see, by the death of these two brave fellows, the dangers a War Correspondent has to pass through, and how they have to take their notes in the midst of shot and shell. Who would envy their life.

***

ANOTHER sensational crime is reported from Havre. A woman, known as *La Belle Nantaise*, from her having formerly, when in a position to wear expensive toilettes, always preserved the white Breton cap of Nantes, her place of origin, has been strangled by her paramour, a man named Laplante, who was on the editorial staff of the *Journal du Havre*. Jealousy of an Englishman employed at a music-hall in the town was the motive for the crime.

***

THE SLOPER "Award" for inventions ought to have been presented to Samuel Wardell, a clever American, who has fallen a victim to his own invention. Wardell lived alone, and was a lamplighter. In order to get up at five in the morning he was in the habit of putting a ten pound stone on the shelf, connected by a wire with an alarm clock. When the alarm struck the wire pulled a catch which let the shelf fall, and the stone then dropped on the floor with a big thump. The noise would awaken Wardell, who would jump up and run off to put out the lamps. On Christmas Eve he invited about thirty young men of the town to supper. As Samuel only had one room in his house, he had removed all his furniture into the cellar. After the company had left he carried back his bedstead into the room, and, being tired, did not pay particular attention where he placed it, and, worse than all, forgot all about his clock. It happened that when he stretched himself on the bed his head was directly under the shelf. When the alarm went off at five o'clock the shelf dropped, and the stone fell on Wardell's head, crushing the skull.

***

Going It, by Messrs. Maddison Morton, and W. A. Vicars, gives the genial and many friended Johnny the best chance he has had this ever so long. Now what Messrs. Morton and Vicars have got to do is to pull themselves together and give us another or two as good. Why Mr. Morton should, for so long a time, have lain aside the pen I cannot say. If every one who has acted in his immortal *Box and Cox* were, as once I said elsewhere, to subscribe a penny each, what a sum of money it would amount to. Stead got 27,000 pennies the other day. Why, there seem to be some fools about.

***

TOOTSIE is pleased to hear that there are at the present time no female prisoners in the Ipswich gaol. Were all the naughty ladies of Suffolk who had made themselves amenable to the law liberated in order to support Mr. Jesse Collings' candidature? Or did the prospect of his election exercise so good an influence upon them that they refrained from crime altogether?

A CHRONICLE OF CURIOUS EVENTS.

A CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 6th.

31st January, 1851.—A letter from Rome of this date gives an account of an *Exploit of Banditti*, which looks more like romance than reality. It would appear that a theatrical company at Porlini-Popoli, a small town in Italy, was playing the *Death of Cæsar*. The curtain had just fallen on the first act when suddenly it rose and disclosed ten brigands, who, armed with carbines, levelled them so as to command the pit and boxes. At the same time another party of brigands entered the body of the theatre, and menaced the spectators. After a moment of death-like silence, the chief advanced to the footlights, exhibited the keys of the town gates, and said: "Gentlemen, you see by these you are entirely in our power; those, therefore, who I shall name will step forth and repair home in company with one or two of my friends, who will assist him to bring here all his valuables." Submission was inevitable. The Burgomaster was the first victim. Two brigands also went from spectator to spectator, collecting hatfuls of watches, purses, chains, rings, and even umbrellas. When the harvest was gathered and the booty had been heaped up on the stage, the brigands allowed the curtain to fall and quietly withdrew, carrying all with them. The money thus obtained amounted to over 40,000 francs, and the other valuables to about double that sum. The brigands, who probably numbered three or four hundred, escaped, although they were pursued the next day by an Austrian detachment into the mountains. The only house which escaped plunder was the pawnbroker's, the fastening of which resisted all the attempts made to break it.

1st February, 1721.—A drunken nobleman being this day behind the scenes of the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and seeing one of his companions in the front of the house, had the insolence to cross the stage in front of the audience, by whom he was roundly hissed. Rich, the manager, ordered the stage door keeper not to admit his lordship again. The nobleman resented this by slapping the manager's face, an attack which was immediately returned with interest. The nobleman's friends then took up the quarrel with the actors. Swords were drawn and a grand scuffle ensued, which ended in the "gentlemen" being driven into the streets through the stage door. They then again entered the house by the front and continued the riot there, but finally were taken into custody and carried before a magistrate. They, however, wisely made up the matter, and the manager got ample redress. The theatre was closed for seven or eight evenings, and when reopened it was attended by a royal guard. A paragraph in the *Weekly Packet* of 11th March, 1721, says:—"Since the late disturbance at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, two noble peers having represented their case to the Government, a guard of foot soldiers hath been granted them, viz., a sergeant and twelve men, every night they play; the like number do duty at the theatre in Drury Lane, and an officer and forty men at the Opera House in the Haymarket, in regard that his Majesty and their Royal Highnesses do often honour this latter place with their presence."

2nd February, 1650.—This is the date of the birth of Nell Gwynne, for whom the English people have always entertained a peculiar affection. There is a sort of indulgence towards her not generally conceded to any other woman of her class. It is the popular impression that, with all her failings, she had a generous as well as a tender heart: that when raised from poverty, she reserved her wealth for others rather than for herself, and that the influence she possessed was exercised for good objects, and never abused. Relics of Nelly are of rare occurrence. A warming-pan, said to have been in her possession with, for motto, the slightly modified text, "Fear God and *serve* the King," was in existence at the close of the last century.

2nd February, 1852.—Martin Merino, a priest of the Franciscan order, this day attempted to assassinate the Queen of Spain as she was passing with her court along one of the galleries of the Escurial to the church of the Atocha. The stays worn by her Majesty caused the dagger to turn aside from the vital part aimed at, and the assassin succeeded in inflicting only a flesh wound, which, however, bled profusely. Merino was sentenced to death by the garotte and executed on the Campo de Guardias, after being deprived, amid much ceremony, of his priestly office.

3rd February, 1684.—A frost lasted from the beginning of December till this day. Coaches were run, oxen roasted, bulls baited, and a fair held on the river Thames. Evelyn says he walked across the ice from Westminster Stayres to Lambeth, and dined with the Archbishop, afterwards returning across the ice to the Horse-ferry. On the fifth of the last month he crossed in his coach from Lambeth to the Horse-ferry at Millbank. In the year 1814 the ice formed on the Thames above bridge, and a fair was held on it during eight days.

3rd February, 1795.—Parsons, the actor, called the Comic Roscius, died this day at his house in Mead's Row, Lambeth. He was afflicted for several years with asthma, and was buried at Lee, near Blackheath. The author of the *English Theatre* says, that after the young Roscius had acted Hamlet (1812), it might be said without any scruple, he was the worst actor who ever came before the public (except in a part for trial) as a first-rate performer.

4th February, 1833.—Stalls in theatres were first introduced on this date. The name "pit," applied to the space in theatres between the boxes and the stage, is an abbreviation of the word "cockpit." At one time these spaces were used for cock-fighting. The following lines are illustrative:

> "Let but Beatrice
> And Benedict be seen: Lo, in a trice
> The *cockpit*, galleries, boxes, are all full!"

"The bravest nations in the world," says Bishop Hacket, "when they have been at the height of their empire, have took more pride and delight in theatrical shows and magnificent spectacles of triumphs than in any other pompe; for the satisfaction of the eye, when it meets with a right object, is above any other pleasure."

4th February, 1878.—A frightful accident took place this day at the Calais Fair. A large circus, holding 3,000 persons, was one of the attractions. In the midst of the performance a panic, caused by a false alarm of fire, caused the death of twelve persons, and injury to many others. The Circus of Ancient Rome was a place in which chariot races and other games were exhibited.

5th February, 1805.—The East Indiaman, *Earl of Abergavenny*, was this day wrecked on the shambles off the Bill of Portland, and went down in twelve fathoms of water. Of 402 persons on board, only 139 were saved. Her cargo was valued at £200,000, exclusive of 275,000 ounces in dollars.

5th February, 1757.—On this day was fought the Battle of Plassey, making the English the masters of India. Surajah Dowlah, the young Nabob of Bengal, had overpowed the British factory at Calcutta, and committed the monstrous cruelty of shutting up 146 English in the famous Black Hole, where, before morning, all but twenty-three perished miserably. Against him, with 60,000 men, came the "heaven-born soldier," Robert Clive, with about 3,000 troops, of which only a third were English. At the first cannonade, the enemy were thrown into confusion, and fled; Surajah descended into obscurity, and the English found India open to them.

6th February, 1783.—The first ship that displayed the American flag in any British port was recorded this day at the London Custom House. She was loaded with 587 butts of whale oil, belonged to the Island of Nantucket, and was manned wholly with American seamen.

6th February, 1721.—Christian Heinecker, a precocious infant, was born this day at Lubeck. At the age of ten months he could speak; when twelve months old he knew by heart the principal events of the Pentateuch; in his second year he learnt most of the history of the Old and New Testaments; in his third year he could reply to questions on universal history and geography, and learnt to speak French and Latin. In his fourth year he studied religion and church history, and he was able not only to repeat what he had read, but also to reason upon it, and express his own judgment. It is not to be wondered at that he died young—in his fifth year. It cannot be too generally known that extreme precocity like this is of the nature of disease, and a subject for the gravest care.

GRUMBLES OF AN OLD GENTLEMAN IN A TRAIN OF THOUGHT.

More theatres!—wonder how they fill!
So different in my day;
We then had only eight, and still
Found seven would scarcely pay.
Grand was the stage when Kemble drew,
And Kean all eyes would fix:
Plays seem a bore at sixty-two
We liked when twenty-six.

Electric lights they have.

In earlier days the actor's art
Was always well matured;
No novice in the smallest part
Was in my time endured.
'Twas pleasant in the pit to mix
With fellows whom we knew;
Thought judgment, reached at twenty-six,
As ripe as sixty-two.

Old Drury gave us then a treat:
Five acts!—blank verse in all,—
And slumber soft, though hard the seat,
Would on each listener fall.
Now, wide awake the whole play through
Folks watch dramatic tricks:
I couldn't doze, though sixty-two,—
I *did* when twenty-six!

Electric lights they have, I vow,
Instead of ancient floats,
And no one pays for playbills now,
Or taking care of coats.
Extinct with those wax candle-wicks
Seems each ingenious "de."—
How we were fleeced when twenty-six
None know when sixty-two.

Where is the combat?—each intent
On broadsword cut and thrust?
The brigand's flapping boots, that sent
In stamps a cloud of dust?
Those sparks of steel that freely flew,
'Midst shouts of "Bravo, Hicks!"—
Vainly I seek at sixty-two
The joys of twenty-six.

The Brigands.

The palmy days of which you've read
Were those when youth was mine,
And ever since I've often said
Our Drama shows decline.
What! *I* am changed! I swear, by Styx,
That notion may be true.
I'll fancy I at twenty-six
See plays when sixty-two.

THE BENCH AND THE BAD BOY.

He was and always had been a bad boy, and this was his record when e came before the bench. At the age of two he playfully set light to is own wicker cradle; at three he strangled a kitten for fun: at four e drank his mother's gin and had a fit; at five he stole her money and pent it on sweets; at six he threw stones at the parson; at seven he obbed the squire's orchard; at eight he smashed the church windows; t nine he burnt down a haystack; at ten he tossed for coppers on unday mornings; at eleven he got worse, and gambled with playing-ards on a Sabbath evening; at twelve he tried to burst a steam boiler spite another boy; at thirteen he stuck a knife into his little sister; d now, at fourteen, he had chopped up a five-barred gate for a joke, d was charged with doing malicious damage. The Bench, under their nerable chairman, did not know what to do with him, having the fear the Home Office before their eyes. But he looked so old and artful t they asked him his age. Then out spoke the bad boy with fiendish sto:—

"Yah! Yer can't lock me up, 'cos the 'Ome Scratchery says yer mustn't. r can't birch me 'cos I ain't a 'indictable offence.' Yer can't fine me 'cos n't pay, and I mustn't go to quod and be made a 'young gaol bird.' , no! Yer can't bind over my parents, 'cos I ain't got any. The k'us won't have me, 'cos of the ratepayers. Industrial Schools is , and I ain't a paying customer. I can't be sent to a reformatory hout fust going to prison and having my young life p'isoned; so yer'll e to let me off—do yer 'ear!"

The venerable chairman waved his hand in solemn sorrow; the gaoler d aside. Then this bad boy put his finger to his nose, and winked, ed to the Bench, kissed his hand to the chairman, and went away stling a popular ditty. Several of the justices wrote to the editor e *Times* and the Home Secretary by the next post; but that bad was free to go his ways until he ended as a bad man at the hulks or e gallows.

THE EDITOR'S LETTER-BOX.

*** *In consequence of the enormous number of letters received, we are unable to publish those selected as soon as we could desire; but the Editor wishes to assure his Correspondents that all letters of importance and interest will be sure to find a place ultimately in his Letter Box, and he therefore invites correspondence on all subjects.*

No. 11 Room, Red Barracks, Woolwich, *Jan. 6th*, 1886.

Dear Sloper,—Half of our fellows are love-sick. A certain lovely maiden has enchanted them, and that queenly person is none other than your esteemed daughter, Tootsie Sloper.

Oh, Sloper, extend thy arm of mercy o'er our fat heads, and promise that you will inform Tootsie how we adore her. If you dare not broach the subject, start a subscription for a new hat (*as you have had the one you wear too long, in our thinking*), and we will head the list for the new Fund.

Trusting that you will view the sad state of affairs in our barracks with a fatherly affection,—I remain, your obedient servant,

PRIVATE B. BANKS.
(Ordnance Store Department).

P.S.—Should Lord Bob consider himself assailed, he can choose his own weapons.

Ilkley, Yorkshire, *Jan. 7*, 1886.

My Dear Ally,—I really do think as you didn't give me the prize for the four lines of prophecy, you might give me the "Award of Merit." Our family is so like your own that we sympathise with you in a great many things. We are all talented, and all hard up. Miss Sloper said the broker from the County Court was the first stranger to cross your threshold; no one has crossed ours yet, as we are afraid to open the front door; we come and go by the back one. We sympathise and admire you and your family *so* much that we have named the youngest member of our family "Ally Sloper." My sister and I think that you really ought to get "poor Ma" a new dress. No doubt "Miss Sloper" will feel ashamed to see her "Ma" wearing a—(is it a spotted muslin or a printed calico?)—in the middle of winter. It does not become the future mother-in-law of a nobleman. We propose that you get up a "subscription fund" for a new dress for "Ma," and, although we can ill afford it at this season of the year, we forward two halfpenny stamps by way of a start. I am, dear Ally, yours very sincerely, MYRA.

Fort Hubberstone, Milford Haven, *Jan. 8th*, 1886.

Most Gracious Ally,—At the request of several of my comrades, who, as well as myself, noticed that in your issue of the 2nd inst. you were resplendent in a new "masher" hat, I am desired by them to ask whether there is any chance of your old one as a memento of the old year and the many pleasant hours we have derived from your paper? I can assure you it will be taken great care of. With our united love to Tootsie, whom we all admire, and continued success to your revered self, We remain yours, "UBIQUE."

P.S.—We trust you will still continue to uphold the cause of temperance.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, *Jan. 9th*, '86.

Dear Ally,—A happy new year to you, old fossil, and plenty of victuals (gin included) for the year upon which we have just entered. But stop. If I am not in error, your particular friend the broker cleared you out on New Year's Eve; rather an unfortunate occurrence at that festive season, wasn't it? Ah, well, we all have our little misfortunes betimes, but I'm afraid yours occur oftener than you desire, *owing* to the rent, I presume (excuse my little joke, I nearly fainted over it). But enough of this. I am going to make a suggestion, which, if carried out, would amply pay all expense incurred, and a good profit into the bargain. It is this. Why not publish an extra number in the summer, to be called "Ally Sloper's Summer Holidays," in precisely the same style as your "Christmas Holidays" (differing, of course, in pictures and reading matter). You may perhaps think it rather a hazardous undertaking, but I venture to predict that it would be an enormous success, notwithstanding the many drawbacks there are to contend with during the summer season. Advertise it well, Ally, old boy. Think over it, and you will come to the same conclusion as myself and many others to whom I have spoken, and who quite endorse my remarks. Once more I say publish "Ally Sloper's Summer Holidays," and you will have no cause to regret it, but, rather, you will rejoice with unbounded enthusiasm at the most gigantic success ever attained by any paper in the annals of comic literature. I remain yours in anticipation,

A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER.

Hellifield, Near Leeds, *Jan. 10th*, 1886.

Dear Ally,—We, the members of the "Starvation Club" beg to inform you that we have still the fervent admiration for your noble self that we have exhibited in times past, and notwithstanding the extraordinary rise in the price of tripe and the scarcity of mussels, we shall endeavour in this the new year to exceed all former efforts to propagate your fame amongst the various classes of our fellow creatures with whom we come in contact. We join heartily in wishing you a "Happy New Year, and many on 'em," at the same time congratulating you upon those successes of the past which have brightened many a poor afflicted mortal's lot, and cheered on the almost despairing to further efforts in the great battle of life. We pray that as time rolls on you will be a still greater power for good, and that your renown shall spread from pole to pole, so as to enable all nations to join in singing the praises of him who is truly styled the "Friend of Man."

Yours for ever, A. S. HOKEY, *Hon. Sec.*

16 Great Orford Street, Liverpool, *Jan. 10th*, 1886.

Dear Ally Sloper,—Wonders will never cease. We generally associate good resolutions with the New Year, but alas! we sometimes fail to carry out the same; but, oh! how pleased I was to see the change that had come o'er the spirit of your actions—to church, verily, long may it continue, but what will Mrs. Grundy say about—well, I do not wish to be hard, but if "we could only see ourselves," &c., &c.—this is what I mean, Ally, the Book before you looks well. Noble and majestic is your appearance; look at your companion—the umbrella—and the new hat; a proud husband—behold Mrs. Sloper; a happy father—look at the charming Tootsie, and above all, behold the withering look of indignation that you cast upon McGooseley when he dares to speak to you from the door of the Moochers' Arms!—oh, Ally, it is grand!—that is, all *before you* looks well, but alas, alas! why will the spirit of gin—of evil, I mean—stick so close to us? Truly it might have been you that Tom Moore spoke to when he said, "Some flowerets of Eden ye yet inherit, but the trail of the serpent is over them all." Yes, Ally, I want you to be a man, yes, a hero, and to nobly set your face against your curse, viz., your indulgence in that vile "unsweetened"—Oh, to see you such a man! then could you stand with head erect, with a proudly beating heart, and your foot upon your native heath, and say, "My name is Sloper!" If I could only persuade you to take the pledge, how you might rise and shine! Yet it is never too late, and in case that you gave your last penny in the church, I have saved one—a penny, not a church—and bought a pledge card with it, fondly hoping you will see that it is for the benefit of yourself. How I wish to call you friend of mine—for Mrs. S., and for the charming Tootsie—take no notice of the last name, please, for my own charmer is sitting by the fire while I write this. That you will sign the pledge, and be a man, is the earnest wish of a W.O.S., SMITH KENNEDY.

P.S.—The W.O.S. stands for Well-wisher of Sloper.—S. K.

HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS.

Bibbins met Bobbins. *Bibbins.*—"Aha! I've become a landed proprietor." *Bobbins.*—"Glad to hear it, I'll come and stop with you." *Bibbins.*—"Do, I've got ten ac(h)ers" (shows his ten fingers). "Nice cold weather. Good morning."

Some invalided old men get to be like a page of music, full of crotchets and quavers.

Caper Sauce.—Insolence from an acrobat.

Native.—"'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain," as Paddy said when he heard the pig grunt.

FOUR FLIRTS.

Their Cards, and How they Played Them.

(Commenced in No. 54.)

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS—*(Continued).*

The poor girl was very, very ill, and I, who had had no experience of sickness, felt my powerlessness most acutely, but I was soon relieved by the arrival of the doctor, who pronounced Ruth's illness, though dangerous, by no means necessarily fatal.

"It is as much mental as bodily," said Mr. Brandon, who, I think I

"I was soon relieved by the arrival of the doctor."

have mentioned before, always seemed to know everything about everything. "I gather from the poor cripple boy and her own disjointed sentences that she went to London to seek employment, and fell in with one of those plausible gentlemen who—Pshaw! It is a story old as the hills. She was deceived—and came home to die—like hundreds of others."

Abrupt as was his speech, it could not hide the wealth of tender feeling which prompted him to take an interest in this poor forlorn creature, and at that moment I respected him more than I had ever done any other member of his sex.

The doctor left in charge of the case, the nurse duly installed, all at Mr. Brandon's cost, our services were no longer needed—not that *I* had done much—and we left the cottage together.

"I will see you to the inn," he said; "take my arm."

I did so, wondering the while at my obedience.

He had a large umbrella, which he opened and held over us both, and beneath its shelter, for it still rained heavily, we splashed along through mud and wet for some time in silence.

"I'm sure I look an awful guy." I said after a while.

"I never saw you look better in your life," he answered. "I don't mean you are not draggle tailed, and your hair blown out of curl; but in this errand of mercy you show to far greater advantage than decked in your fallals and laces, interchanging foolishnesses with fops and noodles."

This was plain speaking with a vengeance, and I hardly knew whether to be pleased or to resent the liberty.

While I still doubted, he resumed:—

"From the first I knew you were capable of better things, from the first I was attracted to you by charms which no other woman ever possessed for me; but when I saw you giving your whole thoughts, your entire mind to pleasure and coquetry, my admiration turned to pity."

I made an effort at these words to take my hand from his arm.

"Don't refuse the shelter of my umbrella because I speak the truth to you," said he. "It is not often you hear the truth from your admirers."

"Mr. Brandon," I exclaimed, "you are taking a most unwarrantable liberty!" and I spoke angrily, all the more so, perhaps, that I felt his reproaches were just, and that I deserved every word he said. Still, it was not for *him* to lecture me in such a fashion.

"I am sorry you think it a liberty," he rejoined sadly. "Of course I have no right to address you in this manner—unless, indeed, you permit me to do so."

"But I do *not* permit it," I answered sharply. "You have taken advantage of this occasion to address me in terms which—which no gentleman should use to a lady; and—and—I will not submit to it."

"And that is really your true opinion of me?" he asked, very very sorrowfully.

"It is," I replied; and no sooner had I uttered the words than I would have given anything I possessed to recall them, and yet my pride would not allow me to do so.

We reached the inn door in silence.

"Are you not coming in?" I inquired, as he stood upon the step still holding his dripping umbrella.

He moved his head in sign of negation.

"Do," I cried impulsively, holding out my hand; but he disregarded it, and, raising his hat, turned abruptly on his heel and walked rapidly away. I have never seen him since. Heigho! But he was very rude—wasn't he?

"You have driven Jack away now," said Sister Anne, as I entered the inn parlour. the rain dripping from my waterproof. "He pretended a telegram called him to London. *We* know what that means. Luckily Mr. Holt has returned, or I don't know how we should ever get the boats home."

"Are you not coming in?"

"Delighted to be of any service, I'm sure," said Laurence, with a smirk, and he never had seemed to me so thoroughly detestable as at that moment.

The sight of that man called to my remembrance the packet of letters, which for the time I had forgotten, and looking round the room, I saw lying on a chair the blue serge coat Jack Hathernett had worn at breakfast.

I had no longer any special reason for desiring to obtain possession of those silly scribbles of mine, written at Brighton three years before; still, I was anxious to destroy the records of my folly; so under pretence of moving the coat, I felt the package was still in the pocket, and presently, without attracting observation, I managed to transfer it to my own dress.

(To be continued next week.)

TRUE LOVE.

There was a little girl—such a silly little girl!—
And she walk'd out abroad to meet her lover;
And she didn't care a pin for the puddles she stepp'd in,
Or the rain that was pouring down above her.

A N(ICE) COOL REPLY.

Husband. I am going to have a skate this evening, my dear, so I don't suppose I shall be home before ten o'clock.

Affectionate Little Wife. Very well, dear, if you are not home by that time I shall conclude that you have fallen in, so I shall not wait up after then.

IN A *MUD*-DLE—(A *BOOT*-I-*FULL* SIGHT).

A. SLOPER, ESQ., M.P., T.W.M., F.O.M., T.O.E., ETC., ETC., AS A

MAN SANDWICH

1. The Sandwich Trade has its bright sides, particularly when such a pretty idea as this is adopted.

2. But this isn't a nice situation when somebody is calling "Mad Bull!" at the other end of the Lane.

3. And it's not always pleasant to have to walk on the Thames Embankment on a windy day.

4. Generally speaking, an advertiser likes his boards shown the right way up.

5. This was an enormous idea of ALLY's.

6. Only, when the candle burnt down in its socket! * * * *

7. After all, then, it would appear that ALLY's umbrella was not made to open, or else why didn't he use it?

8. This is an Advertiser who searched in vain for ALLY and his boards.

9. At last he found the boards with their faces to the wall.

10. And when he found ALLY, Goodness knows what happened!

11. They do say, though, that ALLY has retired from the business, after cooking his supper with the timber.

THE BUSY TIME: DOWN TRAIN.

That inevitable old lady, Auntie Meegrims, all behind again as usual, even when the new Porter starts the train five minutes too soon.

HOME RULE OUT OF DOORS.

A Member of *Parnellment* and his newly-married wife.

Inmates of the Gordon's Boys Home dreaming that they are Major-Generals.

A SKETCH.

Taken in the North during the recent frost.

A DEPOSITOR LOSING HIS BALANCE.

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